

# The Mayor and Council of Hurlock

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CHARLES T. CEPHAS, SR.  
PARKER J. DURHAM  
BONNIE FRANZ  
EARL H. MURPHY  
JERRY L. RHUE, SR.

## MINUTES OPEN SESSION MEETING MARCH 10, 2014 6:00 P.M.

Mayor Spratt called the meeting of March 10, 2014, to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Hurlock Town Office located at 311 Charles Street. Following the Pledge of Allegiance, Councilman Reverend Charles Cephas said the opening prayer. The roll call was then taken. Those in attendance were: Council members Parker Durham, Jerry Rhue, Bonnie Franz, Earl Murphy, Charles Cephas, Mayor Joyce Spratt, Clerk John Avery and Town Attorney, Robert Merriken.

Councilman Cephas made a Motion to approve the Agenda. Councilman Murphy seconded the Motion. With no discussion and no one opposed, the Motion to approve the agenda was passed and carried with a vote of 5-0.

The Minutes of the Open Session Meeting held on February 24, 2013 were approved with one correction. Councilman Murphy made a Motion to approve the minutes with a correction on page 3; that read Councilwoman Franz **did like the 4-way stop**. The minutes should read that Councilwoman Franz **did not like the 4-way stop**. Councilman Rhue seconded the Motion to approve. With no discussion and no one opposed, the Motion to approve the minutes was passed and carried with a vote of 4-0. Councilman Durham was absent from the February 24<sup>th</sup> meeting and therefore abstained from voting.

The Minutes of the Executive Session Meeting held on February 24, 2014 were approved. Councilman Cephas made a Motion to approve the minutes. Councilwoman Franz seconded the Motion. With a vote of 4-0 the Motion was passed and carried. Councilman Durham was absent from the February 24<sup>th</sup> meeting and therefore abstained from voting.

**Mayor's Report** - No news to report

Mayor Spratt read a report from David Carrier in regards to the Hurlock Fire Department. The fire department greatly appreciated the Crown Victoria, which was an old police vehicle that was donated to the fire department from the Town. The fire department appreciation dinner will be held Saturday night and most of the council will be in attendance.

**Police Report** - Chief of Police Les Hutton reported the Hurlock Police Department handled 221 calls in February 2014; 18 of those calls were 911 transfers. Chief Hutton announced a replacement had been named to fill the vacancy Sgt. Lewis left. Matthew Mitten was hired to fill the position. Mr. Mitten is a Hurlock resident. He has 7 years' experience with the Talbot County Sheriff's department. Mr. Mitten has a lot of experience and training and he is already certified, therefore does not need to attend the academy for training.

**Old Business** - Mayor Spratt read a statement regarding the Executive Session meeting held immediately following the Open Session Meeting on February 24<sup>th</sup>. The Mayor and Council, Town Clerk and legal counsel discussed a discrepancy in the reimbursement of two of the town's employee's regarding reimbursements made for health insurance benefits obtained elsewhere when the employee elected not to be covered by the town insurance. One employee had been receiving reimbursements, one employee had not. The Council, after a Motion and a second, resolved to retroactively reimburse the one employee that had not been receiving the reimbursements for the cost of that employee's coverage and to continue to reimburse both employees for the respective costs until provisions are made to the Town's policy that will be effective to all Town employees.

**County Councilman Rick Price Report** – Councilman Price reported on the last County Council meeting. The meeting included a public hearing, followed by a vote to authorize a loan of 1.5 million dollars to pay the Dorchester County share of the costs for construction at Chesapeake College for the new Allied Health and Physical Education Building. The total cost is 36 million dollars of which 27 million dollars of that will be coming from the State. The rest will be split between counties. The Council also approved moving forward with an amendment that will bring about changes at the County Landfill at Beulah to extend its life, which will include a vertical expansion of 68 feet and the vote will allow the county to move ahead with the permit process. The Council voted to write a letter to legislatures in Annapolis opposing the Community Cleaning and Greening Act that would place a nickel on every plastic bag a retailer uses in the course of a purchase by a customer. This would be to offset costs that counties in the State are going to incur to comply with the watershed implementation planning milestones. The Council approved advertising for bids for renovating the homeless shelter at the Salvation Army in Cambridge. Next budget work session is Thursday at 5:00 p.m. and the next regular meeting is next Tuesday. (See attached report).

Councilman Jerry Rhue asked Mr. Price if the 68-foot landfill expansion would be added to the current height. The answer was yes. Councilman Price was unsure of how high it currently is.

**New Business** - Sheila Fooks and Valerie Brown were in attendance to request a rezoning at 200 Neelson Street to I-2. It was changed to C-2 when Family Dollar was brought into Town. The previous administration was adamant about rezoning the whole property. Councilman Murphy asked for some of the goals and reasons for going back to I-2. The answer was the current zoning would not allow them to do what they would like to do, because it is too close to the industrial users at that part of the street. Their intent is to clean up the large building that is on the property and maybe rent it. There has been interest in renting the property. The Council made the recommendation to forward the request to the Hurlock Planning and Zoning Commission.

**Agenda Requests** – Mr. Frank Bittner spoke about a group meeting that has been held on the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of the month for approximately 1 year. The group has made notes of items they deem necessary and copies of the list have been forwarded to the Council. Some of the items on the list are: other towns have crime watchers so they can look out for each other, town donations; line item in budget, Charter Amendments, money spent on codification, questions about voters and that citizens can only vote if registered in the county and that citizens should be allowed to only vote in the Town.

Paul Bovankovich stated that what they are doing is suggesting that more people get involved and let the group grow, notices and agendas should be posted in advance, minutes should be available, both written and audio. Residents should be informed about events in Town newsletters. He felt newsletters would get more people involved. Mr. Bovankovich spoke of a letter addressed to the Mayor & Council. (See attached letter).

Pat Finley stated concerns about the salaries of the council members and the Mayor and if they are reasonable, developing an ethics board, have council members take time to answer questions once a month; perhaps on a Saturday, have the council do long term planning so things are not left out, and if there should be a handbook for the council. The Mayor stated she encourages the council to go to the MML Convention every year.

Matthew Fahey spoke about zoning concerns and improving methods of communication with the public and how it pertains to zoning issues. He felt information regarding meetings and other zoning issues should be advertised in the newspaper and on the Town website.

Lynn Vincent spoke about trash lying around the town and we should make an effort to keep the town clean. Ms. Vincent suggested placing trash containers around the town for citizens to put their trash in. She also mentioned houses with interior furniture on their porches. It looks very inappropriate. Ms. Vincent had other suggestions for improving the Town.

Mr. Bittner thanked the Mayor and Council for hearing them and asked that the Town vigorously support the North Dorchester Railroad group for the rails to be turned over to the group he felt that this could be the 2<sup>nd</sup> biggest asset in the County. He had comments regarding the duties of the Council and issues with fire hydrants. Clerk Avery said that all hydrants in town worked and would receive routine service. There are some older

ones that will be replaced. Mr. Bittner also had suggestions regarding trash containers in the town. There were comments about the town establishing a public utilities commission. The Mayor thanked Mr. Bittner.

**Comments from the Council** - Councilman Durham apologized for missing the last meeting due to an accident coming back from his daughter's wedding. He appreciated everyone turning out for the meetings. Councilman Durham said he had never gotten information from residents and the salaries could be revisited. He also stated the Chris Adams had tried to do Saturday meetings, but it did not work out. He added that some of the website information is outdated. He acknowledged that there had been some talk about natural gas from residents.

Councilman Rhue stated he felt the Council is working much smoother. He commented about the natural gas situation. Councilman Rhue stated that residents were welcome to contact him any time. He has lived in Hurlock all his life and felt it is his little Town too.

Councilwoman Franz thanked everyone for coming to the meeting and asked all the citizens to say a prayer for the passengers and families of the missing plane.

Mayor Spratt announced they would let the citizens know when the next cleanup day would be at the next meeting. The new salon on Rt. 392 would be opening tomorrow. The name is Silver Salon and is owned by Ashley and Jenna Hughes. In regards to the list presented to the Mayor and Council from Mr. Frank Bittner and his group committee, Mayor Spratt said most of the items listed have already been addressed.

Councilman Murphy stated he had been on the Council for 2 short months. He acknowledged that he loved the letter from Paul Bovankovich. Councilman Murphy also stated that he is always available by phone or email to the citizens of Hurlock. He further stated that Woodsedge has a neighborhood watch program and would help with other areas in setting up a neighborhood watch program. Councilman Murphy said he is looking into a community emergency response team. He announced also there is a group named Hurlock's Helping Hands and he believes individuals would participate and there are younger people that are very anxious to help and willing to talk with the Council to see if they can help with Town clean up. There is an opportunity to help Hurlock look beautiful. Councilman Murphy said he has been a resident of Hurlock since 2005 and he sees a Town that is beautiful inside and out.

Monroe Quailes stated he was disheartened to hear Councilman Durham patronize ~~Ministers & Citizens Organization~~. Mr. Quailes had promised the Mayor & Council to remain silent in regards to the organization. On February 28<sup>th</sup>, his wife had to be taken to the hospital by the Hurlock Fire Department. He wished to thank everyone for their help.

Paul Grahe thanked Clerk Avery and the public works department for helping with issues during the last snowstorm.



Reverend Dickerson asked how many minutes do people have if on the Agenda Request? The answer was 10 minutes. Reverend Dickerson then asked if tires are accepted during the Community Clean-Up. The answer was no. Councilman Murphy announced that the County holds a tire-recycling day in the summer, when you can take old tires. He volunteered to help citizens get the old tires to the recycling site.

Mayor Spratt suggested if anyone has a power washer to volunteer to clean their neighbor's house to get the green off of it.

Pat Finley announced there would be a feral cat clinic this weekend held by Snip and Tuck. Citizens could contact her or contact Snip and Tuck. Citizens need to let her know if they have stray/feral cats in their neighborhood, so they can figure approximately how many cats there would be.

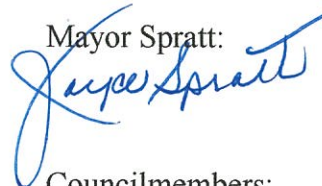
Mayor Spratt announced the next Town meeting would be held on Monday March 24, 2014.

Councilman Durham made a Motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilman Rhue seconded the Motion. With no discussion and all in favor, the Motion to adjourn was approved with a vote of 5-0.

Respectively submitted,

  
John Avery  
Clerk/Treasurer

Approved: Mayor Spratt:



Councilmembers:


# **MOTIONS AND VOTES BY COUNCIL MEMBERS**

## **OPEN SESSION MEETING**

### **MARCH 10, 2014**

Motion to approve the Agenda was made by Councilman Cephas. Councilman Murphy seconded the Motion and with no discussion and no one opposed the Motion to approve the agenda was passed and carried with a vote of 5-0.

Motion to approve Minutes of the Open Session Meeting held on February 24, 2014 was made by Councilman Murphy with one correction on page 3. It should read, "**Council woman Franz did not like the 4 way stop**". Councilman Rhue seconded the Motion. With one correction made and no one opposed, the Motion to approve the minutes was passed and carried with a vote of 4-0. Councilman Durham was absent from the February 24<sup>th</sup> meeting and therefore abstained from voting.

Motion to approve the Minutes of the Executive Session Meeting held on February 24, 2014 was made by Councilman Cephas. Councilwoman Franz seconded the Motion. With all in favor and no one opposed, the Motion to approve the Minutes was passed and carried with a vote of 4-0. Councilman Durham was absent from the February 24<sup>th</sup> meeting and therefore abstained from voting.

The Council recommended forwarding a request by Sheila Fuchs and Valerie Brown to change zoning at 200 Nealson Street from C-2 to I-2 to the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Councilman Durham. Council Rhue seconded the Motion. With no discussion and all in favor, the Motion to adjourn was passed and carried with a vote of 5-0.